Legislation Details (With Text)

File #:	Res 0987-2025	**Version:**	*	**Name:**	Declaring July 26 as Haitian Konpa Day.
Type:	Resolution			**Status:**	Adopted
				In control:	Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Organizations
On agenda:	7/14/2025				
Enactment date:				**Enactment #:**	

Title: Resolution declaring July 26 as Haitian Konpa Day annually to celebrate the legacy of Haitian music and dance in the cultural landscape of City of New York

Sponsors:

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Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
7/14/2025	*	City Council	Introduced by Council	
7/14/2025	*	City Council	Referred to Comm by Council	
11/20/2025	*	Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Organizations	Hearing Held by Committee	
11/20/2025	*	Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Organizations	Laid Over by Committee	
12/4/2025	*	Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Organizations	Hearing Held by Committee	
12/4/2025	*	Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Organizations	Approved by Committee	Pass
12/4/2025	*	City Council	Approved, by Council	

Res. No. 987

Resolution declaring July 26 as Haitian Konpa Day annually to celebrate the legacy of Haitian music and dance in the cultural landscape of City of New York

By Council Members Joseph, Williams, Narcisse, Restler, Banks, Louis, Brooks-Powers, Menin, Ayala, Gutiérrez, Cabán, Ossé and Won

Whereas, Konpa music was originally known as Compas Direct (from the Spanish *compás*, meaning "musical measure"), but was changed to Konpa when Haitian Creole became an official language of Haiti in

1987; and

Whereas, Konpa was created in 1955 by Haitian saxophonist, composer, and bandleader Nemours Jean-Baptiste and his Conjunto International band in the clubs of Port-au-Prince, Haiti; and

Whereas, Jean-Baptiste used *méringue de salon*, a style of Haitian dance music, as a base for his new music, but slowed it down and incorporated guitars, brass, tanbou and conga drums, cowbell, and keyboards, with elements of jazz, African beats, and Cuban music; and

Whereas, Konpa music, along with its accompanying dance style of flowing movement and intricate footwork, is known for its infectious driving and steady rhythm, catchy melodies, and upbeat mood, with lyrics often addressing love, social issues, and Haitian life and sung in Creole, Spanish, French, Portuguese, or English; and

Whereas, Jean-Baptiste's band, with the new name of Ensemble aux Calebasses and later Ensemble Nemours Jean-Baptiste, played throughout the Caribbean, made Konpa a part of Caribbean culture in many countries, and influenced the development of other music styles, such as Zouk music in the French Antilles; and

Whereas, Konpa music was first played by bands and orchestras like Jean-Baptiste's and others, including saxophonist's Webert Sicot's La Flèche d'Or Orchestra, which eventually developed its own variation of Konpa; and

Whereas, In the 1970s, mini-jazz bands of electric guitars, keyboards, drums, a solo saxophone, and singers created the next wave of Konpa as they battled each other in music rivalries and were influenced by rock, pop, and Latin music; and

Whereas, Since the mid-1980s as Konpa has continued to evolve as a music genre, drum machines and electronic instruments, such as synthesizers, have become central to Konpa groups, which have been influenced by Hip Hop and Afrobeats; and

Whereas, Konpa now enjoys a worldwide audience, including a following in the Haitian diaspora in the United States (U.S.), Canada, and France; and

Whereas, On July 24 through 26, 2024, the Ministry of Culture and Communication in Haiti held a three -day celebration on the 69th anniversary of Haitian Konpa, along with a symposium on the protection of this music as part of Haiti's national heritage; and

Whereas, In March 2024, Haiti nominated Konpa to be included on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity compiled by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); and

Whereas, The difficult political and social situation in Haiti in recent years caused many Konpa musicians to relocate, with many coming to New York City (NYC) and Miami; and

Whereas, Among U.S. states, New York State ranks second as the home of Haitian immigrants, with about 20 percent of Haitian immigrants in the U.S.; and

Whereas, Among U.S. counties, NYC's Kings County, which includes the Flatbush neighborhood officially designated by NYC in 2018 as Little Haiti, ranks fourth as the home of Haitian immigrants in the U.S.; and

Whereas, According to a 2023 report from the Migration Policy Institute, about 163,000 Haitian immigrants live in the NYC metropolitan area; and

Whereas, Konpa, an inspirational and continually evolving tribute to the creativity of Haitian musicians and a treasured part of Haitian culture, now enriches and broadens the arts and cultural fabric of NYC; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York declares July 26 as Haitian Konpa Day annually to celebrate the legacy of Haitian music and dance in the cultural landscape of City of New York.

LS #19901
6/11/2025
RHP